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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- 2021 ACT ON CLIMATE  
CHANGE

Introduced By: Senators Rogers, de la Cruz, E Morgan, and Paolino

Date Introduced: February 26, 2025

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-6.2-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-6.2 entitled "2021 Act  
2 on Climate" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-6.2-2. Purpose of the council.**

4 (a) The council shall have the following duties:

5 (1) Assess, integrate, and coordinate climate change efforts throughout state agencies to  
6 reduce emissions, strengthen the resilience of communities and infrastructure, and prepare for the  
7 effects on climate change, including, but not limited to, coordinating vulnerability assessments  
8 throughout state government;

9 (2)(i) No later than December 31, 2025, and every five (5) years thereafter, submit to the  
10 governor and general assembly an updated plan, following an opportunity for public comment, that  
11 includes strategies, programs, and actions to meet economy-wide enforceable targets for  
12 greenhouse gas emissions reductions as follows:

13 (A) Ten percent (10%) below 1990 levels by 2020;

14 (B) Forty-five percent (45%) below 1990 levels by 2030;

15 (C) Eighty percent (80%) below 1990 levels by 2040;

16 (D) Net-zero emissions by 2050.

17 No action shall be brought pursuant to: subsection (a)(2)(i)(B) of this section before 2031,  
18 pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(i)(C) of this section before 2041, and pursuant to subsection

1 (a)(2)(i)(D) of this section before 2051.

2 (ii) The plan shall also include procedures and public metrics for periodic measurement,  
3 not less frequently than once every five (5) years, of progress necessary to meet these targets and  
4 for evaluating the possibility of meeting higher targets through cost-effective measures.

5 (iii) The plan shall address in writing the annual input that is provided to the council by its  
6 advisory board, as set forth in § 42-6.2-4, and its science and technical advisory board, as set forth  
7 in § 42-6.2-5, in their reports to the council.

8 (iv) If a plan directs an agency to promulgate regulations, then the agency must do so by  
9 either issuing an advance notice of proposed rulemaking, as set forth in § 42-35-2.5, no later than  
10 six (6) months after the plan is released or by issuing a notice of proposed rulemaking, as set forth  
11 in § 42-35-2.7, no later than one year after the plan is released, unless the plan specifies another  
12 timeframe for an advance notice of rulemaking or a notice of rulemaking.

13 (v) The plan shall include an equitable transition to climate compliance for environmental  
14 justice populations, redress past environmental and public health inequities, and include a process  
15 where the interests of and people from populations most vulnerable to the effects of climate change  
16 and at risk of pollution, displacement, energy burden, and cost influence such plan.

17 (vi) The plan shall identify support for workers during this equitable transition to address  
18 inequity in the state by creating quality and family-sustaining clean energy jobs that pay wages and  
19 benefits consistent with or that exceed area wage and labor standards. The plan shall provide for  
20 the development of programs that directly recruit, train, and retain those underrepresented in the  
21 workforce, including women, people of color, indigenous people, veterans, formerly incarcerated  
22 people, and people living with disabilities.

23 (vii) The requirements under this subsection shall be subject to the enforcement provisions  
24 of § 42-6.2-10 effective in 2026.

25 (viii) No later than December 31, 2022, the council shall submit to the governor and the  
26 general assembly an update to the greenhouse gas emission's reduction plan dated "December  
27 2016" which shall not be subject to the requirements of subsections (a)(2)(ii) through (a)(2)(vi) of  
28 this section. No action shall be brought pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(viii) of this section before  
29 2023;

30 (3) Advance the state's understanding of the effects on climate change including, but not  
31 limited to: sea level rise; coastal and shoreline changes; severe weather events; critical  
32 infrastructure vulnerability; food security; and ecosystem, economic, and health impacts, including  
33 the effects of carbon pollution on children's health;

34 (4) Identify strategies to prepare for these effects and communicate them to Rhode

1 Islanders, including strategies that incentivize businesses, institutions, and industry to adapt to  
2 climate change;

3 (5) Work with municipalities to support the development of sustainable and resilient  
4 communities;

5 (6) Identify and leverage federal, state, and private funding opportunities for emission  
6 reduction and climate change preparedness and adaption work in Rhode Island;

7 (7) Advise the governor, the general assembly, and the public on ways to ensure that Rhode  
8 Island continues to be a national leader in developing and implementing strategies that effectively  
9 address the challenges on climate change;

10 (8) Work with other New England states to explore areas of mutual interest to achieve  
11 common goals; ~~and~~

12 (9) Identify and facilitate opportunities to educate the public about climate change and  
13 efforts throughout state agencies and municipalities to address climate change; ~~and~~ and

14 (10) Evaluate and make recommendations for the use of carbon emissions removal  
15 technology as an alternative approach to reducing carbon emissions and meeting the climate goals  
16 as set forth in this chapter.

17 (b) The council is encouraged to utilize the expertise of Rhode Island universities and  
18 colleges in carrying out the duties described in subsection (a) of this section, specifically to ensure  
19 that the state's efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change are based on the best available  
20 scientific and technical information, and to optimize the contribution by the universities and  
21 colleges of their expertise and experience in research, analysis, modeling, mapping, applications to  
22 on-the-ground situations, technical assistance, community outreach, and public education.

23 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

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1           This act would require the executive climate change coordinating council to evaluate and  
2           make recommendations for the use of carbon emissions removal technology as an alternative  
3           approach to reducing carbon emissions and meeting the climate goals set forth in the act on climate  
4           change.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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